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318 ஆம் பக்கத்தைக் காண்க.

Esteemed Members of the Legislature,

I have great pleasure in welcoming you all to this combined session.

2. The food position in Tamil Nadu is comfortable. There is no restriction on the movement of paddy and rice within the State. Even traders transporting rice or paddy outside the State have to give only a levy of 20 per cent.

3. The Tamil Nadu Government has been taking up with the Central Government the question of fair procurement price for paddy and stressing the need for fixing the price based on the cost of production. The Chief Minister reiterated this request by writing to the Prime Minister and the Union Agriculture Minister. Thanks to these efforts, the Central Government has raised the basic price for coarse variety of paddy from Rs. 78 to Rs. 85 per quintal. This is not adequate to cover the expenditure incurred by the agriculturists for paddy production. The price of wheat is fixed by Government of India based on the cost of cultivation. It is unfortunate that the request of Tamil Nadu Government to fix the price of paddy on a similar basis has not been conceded. There will be no let up in the State Government's efforts in emphasising the need for a fair price. Tamil Nadu will also stress the need for Government of India to subsidise rice price to the extent of wheat subsidy in order to continue to make rice available to the consumers at reasonable prices, simultaneously ensuring fair price to the producer.

4. Under the scheme for establishment of a fair price shop in every village, about 13,400 villages have benefited upto 31st January 1979. The remaining villages also will be covered within one or two months. This scheme involving a net expenditure of about Rs. 3 crores per year, confers great benefits on the villagers. The Central Government has now evolved a scheme to assist the establishment of such village shops. I would like to urge the Government o India to allow assistance under its new scheme, to all the village shops in Tamil Nadu.

5. The Government has been giving special attention not only to distribution but also generation of electricity. During the last year the 35 MW. Suruliyar power station and the 110 MW. Kundah fourth stage power station have started their operations. The first 210 MW generator of the Tuticorin Thermal Power Station

will be connected to the grid shortly. The Central Electricity Authority has approved the Lower Mettur Power Scheme having four power stations downstream of Mettur utilising the irrigation discharge. This scheme, with a total capacity of 120 MW. is expected to produce annually, on an average, 537 million units. Work on this project has already started. Work on the Kadamparai pumped storage power scheme has also commenced.

6. It is hoped that there will be no power cut during this year provided we have a normal South-west mansoon. Government has taken a policy decision that, in the event of any future power cut, small scale industries will be exempted from power cut as Agriculture is exempted at present. I hope that the Honourable Members will welcome this decision to encourage the small scale industries which provide widespread employment opportunities.

7. The Government has evolved a massive new scheme to provide house-sites to all the landless poor in the rural areas. Benami lands and surplus lands will be taken over and utilised for the implementation of this scheme. Proper layouts with necessary facilities will be drawn up for development of these lands.

8. The Government has also started the implementation of a new scheme to construct one lakh houses in rural areas within a five year period. Under this scheme, loans for house construction will be given to the villagers through Co-operative House Building Societies, each covering a revenue division. A subsidy not exceeding Rs. 600 will be given to the poor harijans whose annual income is not more than Rs. 4,200. It is the policy of this Government to leave habitations in which people of various castes live together. in pursuance of this policy, subsidy will be given to poor persons of other castes also who opt to live in predominantly harijan habitations. Under this scheme, houses will be built utilising the locally available building materials, enabling construction with economy. The borrowers will be allowed to remit their share of 20 per cent of the cost of the house, in cash or by way of labour.

9. The Government has decided to draw up village planning schemes to create new villages and to expand the existing villages in a planned manner. All along, urban and semi-urban areas have been developed under Town Planning Schemes; the Government now proposes to take steps to execute village planning schemes to develop villages also on proper lines with facilities like drinking water, drainage, education and street lighting. During the coming year this scheme will be implemented in five Panchayat Unions in each of the Districts. Soon this will be extended throughout the State.

10. The Government has decided to take steps to change the atmosphere of frustration among landless labourers, small farmers and among unemployed, both educated and uneducated by elimination of unemployment in rural areas, ushering in an era of hope in their future. Unskilled labourers have to be trained in skills and must be imparted proper education in the use of toolss and an environment should be created in which they are successfully self-employed. The benefits of various schemes drawn by Government should reach those who ought to get these benefits. To help lakhs of people, who suffer due to unemployment, this Government has decided to launch an Employment Guarantee Scheme in rural areas, from the coming year, with Panchayat Union as the unit. I am sure Members would be happy to welcome this scheme, which will activise the rural areas.

11. The Government has decided to set up a Directorate of Sericulture so as to concentrate on the development of silk industry which creates job opportunities in rural areas. During this year the new area brought under mulberry was 4,000 acres. Steps are being taken to raise mulberry in 8,000 acres more in the next year. Within six months of their inception, the 8 District Industries Centres have rendered assistance enabling more than 900 new small scale industries to go into actual production. About 11,000 persons have secured job opportunities in these units. The Tamil Nadu Industrial Investment Corporation has opened three new branches at Tiruchirappalli, Cuddalore and Dharmapuri to facilitate extension of credit facilities to small borrowers. An independent rural industries wing is being organised under the Khadi and Village Industries Board in order to encourage setting up of rural industries and to pay special attention to the marketing of their products.

12. A project for setting up a modern salt factory covering an extent of 6,000 acres in Vedaranyam region has been recently approved by the Government. This scheme, which will be executed in a period of three years, will give employment for hundreds of persons. The Government is also examining the feesibility of setting up salt pans on either side of the Buckingham Canal, utilising the coolant water of the Kalpakkam power station.

13. While earnest efforts are being taken to establish more rural industries, the Government has with determination and direction taken steps to encourage large industries which are basic to economic development. The Tamil Nadu Minerals Limited, set up recently, has started mining work in various places and is engaged in exporting balck granite. In order to scientifically mine magnesite, a rare

mineral in this country, Tamil Nadu Magnesite Limited, a new Company in public sector has been set up. It has started its activities a few days ago. A joint sector project is also being established to utilise the mined material. The Government is also examining proposal in consultation with Government of India for establishment of a dry dock which can undertake repairs for ocean going vessels both of Indian and foreign flags.

14. Messrs. Tuticorin Alkali Chemicals are establishing a factory at Tuticorin at a total cost of Rs. 35 crores, utilising salt as a raw material. Necessary steps are being taken to obtain the assistance of the All India Financial Institution. Recently technical collaboration agreements were signed at Tokyo in the presence of the Chief Minister with the Japanese firm, Hitachi Zoshen. This factory will produce, annually, Rs. 16 crores worth of Soda Ash and Fertilisers which are in great demand in the country today.

15. The Honourable Members are aware of this Government's plan to utilise bagasse, hitherto used only as fuel, as a raw material for production of newsprint. Having realised the need for utilisation of such alternative raw materials in the context of the shortage of forest based raw materials, the Central Government has recently announced special concessions for paper factories utilising bagasse to meet more than 75 per cent of their raw material requirement. Our Government has applied to the Government of India for a letter of intent for setting up the new factory.

16. In a situation where the availability of jobs in the Government are few and persons seeking Government employment are many, the Government wants to give preference in giving jobs to the off-springs of poor and illiterate parents. Government will implement this policy without detriment to the existing special concessions for the Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes. With this emphasis, I hope that the new generation of youngsters whose fore-fathers had not enjoyed such job opportunities for years will start their careers with confidence and courage.

17. It is the policy of this Government to widely disperse the headquarters of various Directorates and the Government Corporations, not allowing all of them to be crowded in Madras City. Based in this policy, the Tamil Nadu Harijan Housing and Development Corporation had its headquarters shifted to Villupuram. The office of the Registrar of Co operative Societies (Housing) has been shifted to Thiruchirappalli. The proposed Sericulture Directorate will function with Salem as its headquarters. Government will take further steps in this direction.

18. The Government announced its decision, during the Periyar Centenary Celebrations, on the bifurcation of Coimbatore district and creation of a new district with Erode as its headquarters. A Special Officer will be appointed soon to take necessary steps for the formation of the new district and the district will start functioning soon.

19. In the context of the growing economy, persons trained in management techniques are required by the Government and enterprises both under public and private sectors Towards meeting this growing demand, Government has decided to set up a new institute to be called the Madras Institute of Management with the participation of the Government, Government institutions and the general public. I hope that the public and the Government of India will readily come forward to help in the establishment and development of this institute. As a first step this Institute will begin to function soon for training Government officers and public sector employees.

20. A large number of persons from Tamil Nadu are doing excellent work in various foreign countries. During the recent visit of the Chief Minister abroad, he was immensely pleased to know how keen they are to render their services for the development of their Motherland. I am happy to announce that the Government of Tamil Nadu is drawing up detailed schemes to utilise, during their visits to Tamil Nadu, the talents of these persons, who are in touch with latest scientific advancements.

21. The Honourable Members of the Legislature would not have forgotten the great loss to life and property sustained by the people in Madras, Nilgiris district and coastal areas around Pamban, due to a heavy and continuous downpour. I want to particularly congratulate the Government machinery, public undertakings, voluntary organisations and others who have rendered necessary assistance efficiently to the affected people on a war footing, making use of their earlier experience in meeting the challenge of the wrath of Nature. We are greatful to the Government of India for having sent a Study Team promptly and also having sanctioned a grant of Rs. 10 crores, though the assistance did not match the full extent of damage.

22. The Nature's fury snatched away many a young child in the Sivakasi area during the last monsoon in an accident, causing immense agony to all of us. It is very difficult for the people of Tamil Nadu to recover from the traumatic shock caused by this tragedy. The Government strongly condemns the practice of some of the industrialists employing children in their factories, especially where explosive materials are used. Any such practice will attract stern legal action.

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23. The House is aware of the damage to life and property when the cyclone which affected Tamil Nadu hit Sri Lanka with great ferocity. Tamil Nadu with its hoary traditon of rushing to the aid of those in distress, even under fire of sacrifice, sent goods worth Rs. 10 lakhs to this neighbouring country. Though the amount is small, I am sure by this noble gesture. it has earned the appreciation of one and all. We also want to thank the Government of India for enabling the TamilNadu Government to render this assistance in time.

24. This Government, with its strong faith in the policy of prohibition, has promulgated recently an Ordinance to intensify the implementation of this policy. This Ordinance stipulates that items like varnish must be manufactured only by-public sector undertakings ; it also specifies life imprisonment for persons who are responsible for deaths due to consumption of illicit liquor. Minimum jail terms have been prescribed for various prohibition offences. Further, it provides for removal of persons who are habitually committing such serious offences, from specific areas. To a certain extent, the Ordinance, had the desired effect. The Government is taking steps to replace the above Ordinance, with modifications, based on the experience during the interregnum by a suitable legislation to enforce prohibition which will go a long way in raising the standard of living of the poor people. I hope the Members of the House will give their valuable suggestions for achieving this noble objective and support this measure. For ensuring the effective implementation of the prohibition policy, the Government has undertaken measures to revamp and strengthen the Police Force.

25. The House is well aware of the commitment of the Government in eliminating corruption in administration and in all walks of life. Thanks to the measures taken by the Government in this direction and the co-operation extended by the Honourable Members of the House, positive results are being produced.

26. I want to refer here to the steps being taken by the Government for preservation and development of Tamil language, art and culture. The Government has recently implemented the Tamil script reform advocated by Periyar E.V.R. and other Tamil scholars. The Government will try to extend its adoption, taking into account the views of scholars. A Tamil Shorthand Dictionary will be published, for the first time, by the Tamil Nadu Text Book Society The Government has sanctioned grants to the International Association o Dravidian Linguistics at Trivandrum for construction of buildings and for continuing its activities. Taking energetic pre iminary s ep for the forthcoming World Tamil Conference at Madurai, the Government has sanctioned a grant of Rs. 50,000 as first instalmen.. I am

sure everyone will acclaim the Government's recent action in honouring eight distinguished artists by grant of awards and monthly payments.

27. It is the firm stand of this Government that Hindi should no be imposed on anybody and that the two language formula will be followed in our State. It is evident that all the political parties of Tamil Nadu are unanimously against imposition of any language. It is appropriate that the Government recently convened a conference of all parties to unify their views on this subject. I hope that all the Legislators, irrespective of party affiliations, will render assistance to the Government in initiating steps which will reflect the strong feelings of the people of Tamil Nadu on this issue.

28. It is but natural to have clash of ideas in any democratic set-up ; to reach constructive decisions and progressive action, such debates are inevitable. No one can have any difference of opinion that individuals and political parties should follow the path set out by Gandhiji and Anna, while exchanging differing view points or in their efforts to propagate their ideas. We have to definitely put an end to the dangerous trend of seeking solutions to problems through acts of violence. My Government is deeply shocked by the few acts of violence that recently took place in our State which is noted all along for its tradition of liberality of thought, logical reasoning, cultured behaviour and peaceful approach. In particular, the murder of Thiru Murugayyan, Member of Parliament gives us great sorrow. The Government condemns this barbaric murder and I can assure you that those who are responsible for this act will not escape from the arms of law and the punishment they deserve. Time has come when leaders of all political parties in Tamil Nadu sit together, deliberate dispassionately and create a situation wherein the atmosphere of peace in the State does not get vitiated by political predilictions or differences due to religion, caste or language. I earnestly request you, as representatives of the people, to create the proper climate.

29. Legislative measures to replace Ordinances and for other purposes will be brought for your consideration and approbation in this session. There will be ample opportunities for all of you to explain different view points and discuss various problems in a friendly atmosphere, true to the democratic principles.

30. I have no doub in my mind that your efforts will make Tamil Nadu the true repository of democratic spirit and traditions ; that your deliberations will have the aim of ensuring the well-being of the people and of enriching their lives, bringing happiness and prosperity to every family.

Vanakkam.